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Dryden lands pivotal role in CBS series, 'Paradise'

HOLLYWOOD, Calif. — Mack Dryden, a native of Moss Point, will be featured in a pivotal role in Wednesday's episode of the CBS series, "Paradise," a Lorimar spokesman said.

Dryden, a 1967 graduate of Moss Point High School, has a recurring role as bartender Scotty McBride on the hour-long western, which is set in California in the 1890s.

"The story is about the townspeople covering up for whoever murdered the town bully," said Dryden. "I don't want to give away a good mystery, so all I can say is I have something to do with finding out who did it."

"Paradise" is usually seen on Thursday nights but will air this week on Wednesday at 7 p.m. on Channel 5, to test a new time slot, a Lorimar spokesman said.

Dryden is pleased with his role in Wednesday's episode. "Being a secondary character, I usually don't get to do or say much," he said. "I was thrilled that they showed enough confidence in me to give me a really important role for a change. And it's a challenge, believe me. The kind of scene an actor both dreads and dreams for. A chance to see how deep you can dig as an actor."

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Dryden of Moss Point.



AP

MACK DRYDEN to portray bartender Scotty McBride on CBS's "Paradise."

Questions airfriend's past



Moss Point native Mack Dryden shares a moment with his daughter Brittany

Dryden's heart remains at home in Moss Point

By DONNA-MICHELLE MANNING

Mississippi Press Staff

Comedian Mack Dryden would rather cook cornbread with his daughter than hobnob at Hollywood parties.

"My daughter is the number one thing in my life," Dryden, 41, said from his California home. Seven-year-old Brittany Dryden spends half her time with Dryden and half her time with her mother who lives nearby.

Dryden, the son of Herbert and Neva Dryden of Moss Point, said his is a close-knit family. He said he comes home at least three times yearly and tries to bring Brittany with him twice a year.

"It's important to me that Brittany grow up knowing her Mississippi family," he said.

Dryden is proud then, that his daughter took her first steps in his home state.

"She was so happy, with her little toothless grin," he said.

Dryden, whose work includes a movie-of-the-week, two television shows, comedy clubs, conventions and commercials, said his parents are the leading forces behind his success.

"My mother quit work when I came along to be a Mom," he said. "We (he and his two brothers) got our senses of humor from my Dad...Anyone who knows my parents, knows what wonderful people they are."

Dryden's parents visited him on the set of the television show *Paradise* in November, 1989, when the actor played the town bartender. The Moss Point couple were even given a split-second bit part at the beginning of one episode.

Herbert Dryden said he loved to see his son on

that show because he was seen regularly. Unfortunately, the show was put on hiatus and when it made its comeback a few weeks ago as *Guns of Paradise*, Dryden's character wasn't on it.

Dryden said the producers invited him to be in the first episode, but he had a previous engagement in Sydney, Australia, with his partner Jamie Alcroft, and couldn't be there.

"After that the storyline moved away from town," he said.

Dryden, who has several big projects in the works for the next few months, said he and Jamie will continue to perform clean comedy. He said when they started doing stand-up 10 years ago, they were told "if you can't do it on television, you can't do it."

He said people like Eddie Murphy, Andrew Dice Clay and Sam Kennison have proved that vulgarity sells.

"They're making millions and we're making a living...We like to make everybody laugh from Grandma to teenage kids," he said.

His brother Tim, 33, a road manager with Ballet Magnificat, the only full time Christian classical ballet company in the world, said he loves the cleanness of Dryden's comedy.

"I love that, both from a wholesome, moral ethical standpoint, but also I think it speaks very highly of their craft," the Jackson man said.

The younger Dryden said his favorite character done by his brother is a take-off on the musician Prince.

"I almost lost my cookies," he said of the first

See DRYDEN

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► Dryden

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time he saw the impersonation of the eccentric singer. "I busted out laughing."

Though Tim Dryden thinks his brother is hilarious, the comedian himself looks to their other brother Daryl for humor.

"He's the funniest man I know," Mack Dryden said. "Anyone who knows him, knows he is one of the funniest men around."

Daryl Dryden, 39, a Pascagoula attorney and Ocean Springs municipal judge, also plays guitar in a rock band on occasions "as a hobby."

"People can complain they didn't win in Daryl's court but they cannot complain he wasn't fair," he said.

The middle brother said he knew his older sibling would be successful after he saw Mack and Jamie's initial

performances in south Florida years ago.

"Even as subjective as a brother is, we could tell they were real good," he said.

He said their parents instilled a "be-anything-you-want-to-be" attitude in them as they were growing up.

"They always encouraged us and pushed us — in any direction we wanted to go — as long as we followed the rules," he said. "They just always wanted us to be sane and happy."

Judge Dryden said he had real sympathy for his mother having to rear three sons and a husband.

"Mack has always been a cut-up, but all of them have been really," she said.

"Mama just remembers the good," she said of herself, "but there were moments when I felt like pinching their little heads off."

The youngest Dryden, Tim, said seeing his brother on television is a "major thrill and sometimes a shock."

He said he thinks his brother caught the acting bug in high school during a school play.

"I remember him kissing a girl on the lips during a play when I was a little boy," he said. "I don't know if that whetted his appetite for acting."

He said he knew Mack was



DRYDEN BROTHERS — Tim, Daryl and Mack Dryden pose in a 1982 photo in front of their grandmother's house in Moss Point.



IN CHARACTER — Mack's parents appeared on one co-star Sigrid Thornton, Neva Dryden and Mack episode of Paradise when he had a continuing role on Dryden. The show. From left are Herbert Dryden, Paradise

serious about his craft when he saw "him and Jamie get in a '67 Plymouth Satellite to drive to New York to get on a comedy club."

He said they made it on stage at a club but were playing at 3

a.m. so they left for California.

Tim Dryden said his brother must live in California if he is to continue working in his chosen field, but said he calls the state a

fantasy land.

"When he comes back home, it's a realness," he said. "He loves home. I've seen him turn down things to spend time with family." **GOULA LIBRARY**

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